

# VANGUARD

AN ANARCHIST COMMUNIST JOURNAL

*Published by the "Vanguard" Group—185 East Broadway, New York City*

VOL. I. No. 2

JULY, 1932

FIVE CENTS

---

EDITORIAL BOARD: ABE COLEMAN, S. MORRISON, T. SAXON

---

## EDITORIAL NOTES

THE REALIZATION that revolutionary anarchism must be maintained, developed further and made popular among the masses of this country, has brought together a group of young students and workers to carry on this work, who will concentrate upon the neglected rising generation. Starting late in the fall, we held several lectures, out-door meetings and socials; debated the socialists and communists, conducted a study group, took the initiative in organizing several lectures on the Spanish situation and organizing the May first demonstration in New York, etc. This is, however, the beginning of our great task. We aim at the establishment of a federation of autonomous youth groups, a militant press, and a coherent plan of action, for the realization of a successful social revolution which will abolish the existing bourgeois society and institute an anarchist-communist society.

Comrades, you can help us tremendously, if you want to, by cooperating with us both morally and financially. If you haven't as yet gotten in touch with us do so as soon as possible. Let's have some real cooperation.

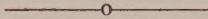
---

WE ARE CONVINCED that imperialist war is inherent in Capitalism. The scramble for new markets, colonies, seaports, etc., and powerful nationalistic feelings are ever present in our bourgeois-controlled system. However, the international situation is complicated; there are many unforeseen forces and unpredictable occurrences in the course of international intrigues, plots and war preparations. We cannot, therefore, foretell when the firing will start or even how it will start. This uncertainty and constant fear is all the more reason for us to better

prepare ourselves to prevent the impending conflict. For only preparation will stop it and *turn it into a social revolution*.

Before 1914 there were numerous occasions upon which the nations could have begun the *Great Slaughter*. But the time was postponed. And at present we can see many situations which are even more grave than Sarajevo. The Sino-Japanese conflict has all the earmarks of the beginning of a new World War. For, it can be easily seen that the fundamental interests of many nations are involved. Soviet Russia is beginning to object. American imperialism cannot let Japan get away with Manchuria, etc. The Hitlerites in Germany and their brothers in Italy are flashing their swords threateningly. The armaments of each nation are increasing despite treaties and pacts. Nationalism is more intense, more pernicious, more rampant than ever before.

That the conflict can arrive very soon is undeniable. That it will break out "tomorrow" is unpredictable. To wit: the mere fact that the communists and others have been predicting war "in a few weeks" or "next month" for several years already has not induced the Capitalist to start a war. One cannot properly say that the bourgeoisie have absolutely no political control over events; that phenomena occur in accordance with a predetermined fatalism. We must not forget that our exploiters are beginning to see that the economic crisis is affecting us quite seriously, and they are trying their damnest to do something about it. But we cannot permit them to lull us to sleep by the hopes of a few more years of "peace." A definite organization against war must be made a specific and integral part of our work. For, as long as capitalism remains, so long does the war danger threaten. We must get ready to build the new society while the old is falling, and whether we are given guns, aeroplanes, battleships or poison gases, we will throw them aside, or, if necessary use them against the ruling class.



POLITICIANS, financiers, and big business men are searching haphazardly for a loophole, a means of escape, running here and there like rats in a trap. Like rats they fail to grasp the situation, fail to see they are in a trap, whose walls are closing in steadily, relentlessly, threatening to crush finally its own creators. Like the rat in the trap, whose wire walls permit a view of the larger world outside, they think they can escape their trap by running around, by doing something continually, by patching, now here, now there, in the vain hope that the machine might start running again.

A brilliant Congressman recently proposed to raise the price level by means of inflation, or increase of the volume of money in circulation. Is the worthy gentleman unaware of the harsh criticisms levied against it even by conservative economists? They have discovered that inflation does introduce high prices *and* they have also discovered that wages, the bread and butter of the workers, *does not keep pace with the rise in prices*. In other words, our representative-of-the-people is suggesting that the starvation wage of today be reduced so low that it will be almost impossible to continue one's existence.



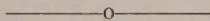
Our financiers are tinkering with the machine from another angle. They noted that during a period of prosperity, when business was expanding and investments were being made with prospects of a rosy future, they had to furnish a lot of credit. Moved by reflexes rather than reason, they have been conditioned to believe that the stimulus, credit, always draws forth the response, prosperity. They forget that business expands and investments are made when the future looks bright, and that credit is only an instrument to facilitate such expansion. Credit is not and cannot determine the future, whose prospects alone move the businessman.

The problem of salvaging the present wreck is being attacked from still a third angle, that of the businessman and merchant. They find themselves overstocked with goods that they can't get rid of. Having as small a vision as the politician and the banker, they believe that everything will be solved if their particular problem is solved. So they send out mighty cries, appealing to our patriotism, our religion, our sense of pride, of decency, of pity, of economy, to buy. "Don't buy much," they cry desperately, "but buy, buy something."

Don't these shortsighted fools know that one needs money to buy, that one needs a job to have money? But the problem of unemployment is too perplexing for their little minds. So they cry "buy" instead.

However, if the people won't get bread, the businessman will at least get his profit, the banker his interest, and the landlord his rent.

The only satisfactory plan is the plan that considers the well-being of people rather than the preservation of capital, the plan that only the workers can formulate, the plan that makes the social revolution inevitable.

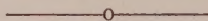


WHILE WE have no sympathy whatever with any group of men coming as veterans of a capitalistic war, and as such, demanding a bonus from "their" government, we are in full accord with them in so far as they are beginning to regard themselves as members of the oppressed working class.

In their publication "The B.E.F. News" they say that they are the "symbol" of a long suffering people who are beginning to become articulate. And they call upon all who are oppressed and discriminated against to initiate similar movements. We learn further that the movement began spontaneously, that they came believing that they had only to present their urgent needs and that the government, recognizing their valorous service in "saving the world for democracy" would immediately grant their demands. Although their paper lacks a definite ideology, it does reflect clearly their rapid loss of faith in "their" government and the disillusionment which the actual contact with the bureaucrats and politicians has caused. They are asking, is there one government for the rich and another for the poor? Does government ever represent the people? One of the cartoons entitled "Between two fires" illustrates their dilemma. The picture shows a soldier in "no man's land." At the one extreme is the black pit of despair, the present administration; at the other extreme are the reds.

Although we do not wish to overestimate the extent to which radical ideas

have permeated this heterogeneous mass, the situation is very significant. We see great potentialities in thousands of suffering and discontented men who are learning the value of direct action and who are becoming more and more class conscious. We regard such increasing class consciousness, the use of direct action and the distrust in government as hopeful signs and we feel that these tendencies will penetrate more deeply the minds of the oppressed masses.



WE RECENTLY DEBATED the Spartacus Youth Club (Trotskyite) on the question, "Is a Dictatorship of the Proletariat Necessary?" Comrades Bluestein and Weiner, took the negative, and successfully presented the Anarchist position on the subject. They took each of the arguments advanced in favor of a dictatorship and revealed the fallacy of the bolshevik position. They exposed the inconsistencies between the theoretical conception of the dictatorship and the actual conditions prevalent in Russia, they portrayed the revolutionary role of the Anarchists during the Russian Revolution and the events leading up to the betrayal of the workers by the bolsheviks once they secured power. They also presented the Anarchist program for leading the workers towards the revolution and after it.

The young Trotskyites took up more than half of their time, by talking about the origin of the state as a result of the division of classes in society. In their lengthy discussion they failed to explain why, after a proletarian revolution, which would entail the abolition of classes, the state should remain. They were confused when confronted by quotations from the works of Marx and Lenin, whose writings they regard with theological reverence. Lenin stated that one of the features of the proletarian dictatorship would be the abolition of the standing army and democracy for the proletariat.

Bluestein and Weiner showed that the dictatorship of a fraction of the C.P. which in turn is headed by an individual does not allow for the creative expression of the masses, who attempt to bring the revolution to its fruition. They easily demolished the argument that in order to have a planned economy there must be a dictatorship, by pointing out that there are two types of planned economy: one from above—from the bureaucracy—, and one from below from the workers and peasants.

The Trotskyites laid all blame of the Russian regime at the doorstep of the "Stalinist bureaucracy." They failed to explain why Trotsky waited to demand democracy in the party after he found himself in the minority. Their battle is staged after the fashion of the Democrats and Republicans. It is not based upon principle, but upon loot and the prestige that goes with the seizure of power. And no matter which faction wins, state capitalism and the bureaucracy remains.

The VANGUARD team presented the Anarchist program for leading the workers toward the overthrow of capitalism through the workers' mass organizations such as the workers' councils, trade unions, co-operatives, etc. The Anarchists refuse to utilize the old state apparatus or recreate again the stand-



ing army, the secret police, etc. They advocate the protection of the workers' society by the volunteer army and the reorganization of society on a federalistic basis. The basic unit is the "Soviet" and as the needs and demands of the workers crystallize and they unit with other units, there develops a world-wide organization on a federated basis.

---

THE DEMOCRATS must have suffered more from the depression than the Republicans: they seem more anxious to forget and drown it in drink. Curiously, we note that both parties are trying to ape the bootleggers—just as the latter introduced alcohol by evading the prohibition act, the former are apparently trying to introduce prosperity by evading the problem of the depression.

---

TWENTY YEARS from now Mr. Seabury will tell us, in an autobiography somewhat similar to Lincoln Steffens' how useless and hopeless it is to attempt to clean up governments. His observations will be particularly timely in view of the widespread scandals being unearthed throughout the country. (That is, if the Social Revolution doesn't come before.)

---

FRENCH CAPITALISTS and German capitalists are not helping the cause of the bourgeoisie with their antics at the debt conference at Lausanne. Their mutual antagonisms and bickerings are pulling capitalism nearer to the inevitable brink—something that the English have already recognized. Even if they could agree among themselves, the crisis would not be helped very much. Until they face the real causes of the depression, *i.e.*, the medieval distribution of commodities applied to modern productive forces, poor organization, the profit motive in production, etc., any solution of the debt problem will produce no more than a ripple on the troubled waters.

---

TO EXCEL is the Great American Tradition. To date we have excelled in mass production, moratoriums, prohibition, gangsterism, and sports. Not satisfied with this enviable record, American genius is branching into other fields: radicalism for example. With the same verve and dash witnessed elsewhere in America, our noble Socialists are attempting to lead their brethren, the world over back to respectability, far from the disgrace of revolution, a road followed by them much too fast already.

Today, we learn from a leading Socialist, that one can join the Socialist Party without acknowledging the Class Conflict. From another comes the proposition to reject the principle of expropriation.

If we were soothsayers we would predict how soon the Socialist Party would reach facism in it's journey to the right.

## Anarchist Communism

THE FAST APPROACHING DOWNFALL of capitalism, as shown by the world-wide economic debacle, is driving men to think about a new social order. It is generally admitted, even by conservatives, that capitalism is on its last legs. The greatest confusion prevails as to what should be done. Many so-called remedies are suggested, ranging from earnest prayer as recommended by the Pope, to fifty-seven varieties of dictatorship—as urged by Fascists, Communists, and Socialists.

The proposed remedies while differing in many respects, possess one quality which is common to all. They are based upon an abiding faith that *government* can remedy all evils. They would extend the functions of the State. The State would control and operate all the industries, would regulate the distribution of commodities, determine the conditions of labor, monopolize the sources of information and enlightenment—schools, newspapers, radio, etc. It would thrust itself into the life of every individual. No one would dare question its authority.

The delegation of power into the hands of an all omnipotent State cannot solve the problems which are facing the working class—the problems of exploitation, of monopoly, of inequality, of suppression of the individual. The State bureaucracy constitutes a class in itself. This privileged class, not being engaged in productive labor, must be supported by the workers. The tremendous waste, inefficiency, and corruption of present day government is well known. How much greater would this burden become, how much more entrenched would this bureaucracy become, should the powers of the State be multiplied a thousand fold?

The growth of a bureaucratic class endowed with special privileges must give rise to inequality. The interests of those who rule, and the interests of those who are ruled cannot be reconciled. The people finding themselves reduced to mere tools in the hands of the all-enveloping State machine would be compelled to check the ever-growing power of the bureaucracy. The Contradictions inherent in state socialism, far from being solved through the metaphysical “Withering away of the state” must result in a war between the privileged bureaucracy and the oppressed masses. It would lead to a social-revolution. The State cannot conduct the economic life of Society in the interests of all. The State cannot lose its class character. The abolition of capitalism is not sufficient as long as the State and its bureaucracy are maintained. The new social order must be based on entirely different principles. The need for a social philosophy which will avoid the pitfalls of state centralization is becoming more and more pressing in the face of the ever-growing tendencies toward dictatorship of one type or another. Anarchism is the only Social theory capable of filling this need. Anarchism aims to establish a society in which the economic activities will be conducted by voluntary groups and federations. It aims to institute mutual



agreement in place of coercion as the guiding principle of human life. The development of the individual should be the sole aim of social life. A social system which does not provide for the development of the individual is a failure. A social system based upon exploitation and oppression cannot allow for the fullest development of the individual. We therefore believe in the abolition not only of Capitalism but also of the State.

Society is an organic whole intricately connected and bound by a thousand ties. Should one organ fail to function it will immediately affect the others. The tremendous complexity and interdependence of social life is leading to communism. Communism is a system whereby industry is operated for the benefit of the whole of society. Society must be conducted upon the basis of *"From each according to his ability and to each according to his needs."* No man has the right to monopolize that which generations of men have labored to produce. The combined efforts of all are necessary in order to produce the means of life, consequently all are entitled to share alike that which all have labored to produce. There is no room in such a society for privilege, inadequately or dictatorship. Anarchist-communism combines freedom and equality. One is indispensable to the other.

The economic life of society should be conducted by those who are actually engaged in industry, through co-operatives, industrial unions, federations and voluntary societies of all kinds and for all purposes. The needs of mankind are so infinitely varied, the specific problems affecting a given industry or locality are so different that no single body, be it a bureaucratic state or a centralized administrative agency, can ascertain and efficiently attend to the needs of society, even if government would be impartial and wholly disinterested which it is not and cannot be. An all-seeing omnipotent governmental bureaucracy in Washington, cannot work the mines in Pennsylvania, or drill oil wells in Oklahoma, or can fruit in California. Only the people who do the work, who are intimately acquainted with the needs of a given industry or community can successfully solve the problems that constantly present themselves. The economic structure must be based upon the fullest possible amount of local autonomy and independent action. The economic basis of society must correspond to life itself, must reflect its many sidedness and its varied interests. This can be done only when every group and every individual is free to conduct his affairs in accordance with his needs. The decentralization of functions in the hands of those directly concerned will insure freedom for the producers, and will prevent the monopoly, oppression, and inefficiency which are the distinguishing characteristics of centralized institutions.

An examination of present-day society will show the extent to which voluntary association and mutual co-operation are responsible for all that is constructive in modern life. The voluntary scientific societies of all types, without which the wonders of modern life would be impossible, the voluntary educational societies, producers' and consumers' co-operatives, labor unions, mutual benefit associations, and societies of all types embracing every field of human endeavor are indispensable to social life. Social life is impossible without mutual agreement. The need for mutual cooperation is so great that even centuries of

governmental oppression and red-tape have been unable to crush them. Recent history fully bears out the contention that government is absolutely helpless in any emergency, that only the creative impetus of the masses is capable of responding to such situations. The abolition of the State and Capitalism will release the masses from the dead weight of exploitation and oppression. Voluntary associations, increased in scope and united by the impetus of mutual necessity, would be free to develop. The constructive genius of mankind would regenerate the social-organism.

The question of the economic structure of the future society will be further developed in the next article, which will also deal with the tactics to be pursued in realizing our Ideal.

SAM WEINER

---



## If

THIS IS THE SPEECH that Professor Anaemicus might have delivered all over England during the early part of 1933, after the crushing victory of the Anarchist Movement in the presidential election of 1932. It is a short concise history of the Anarchist Movement in America as it might have been if the Anarchists had only been as "practical" as, say, the British Labor Movement.

Ladies and Gentlemen, being aware that you, in England, probably do not understand fully the rise of the Anarchists to power in the States, it was decided that I come here and try to explain our position to you. My task is a difficult one and I must beg you to be patient with me if at times I am vague and seem to wander. I am going to try to outline the anarchistic philosophy, to the best of my poor ability, and show you, during the history of its movement, how we have modified American thought and custom, and how America has influenced Anarchist thought.

The Anarchist Movement was started around 1880 by a group of foreigners who came here to escape the clutches of their home authorities. Their intense revolutionary spirit soon found much to rebel against. For a country that claimed to be the land of the free, the people were excessively oppressed. Workers, everywhere, were being exploited in the most inhuman manner, when they worked; and when anything happened so that they couldn't work (sickness, accident, old age, or just plain chronic unemployment)—well, no words can describe their plight. In short it was no different here than in Europe, in spite of the new name, Democracy.

So this small, courageous group of foreigners began to spread their ideas. I say courageous, because it took courage to do what they did: alone, friendless, among a strange people, and through the medium of a foreign tongue, they propagated ideas that were not only new but hateful for their very newness.

They suffered for their activity: they were persecuted mercilessly, and, because money meant nothing to them, they often suffered from want and hunger.

Finally, their firm stand, the intensity of their idealism, showed slight results. A few native Americans were attracted to them and drawn into the Movement (among whom, incidentally, I am proud to say, I was to be found).

Our influence was not very deep at first, since we were, so to speak, merely imbibing at the fountain of their enthusiasm. It is a noteworthy fact that all of the Americans were college graduates, so-called intellectuals. Our advent into the Movement meant the introduction of a cool, calculating element that refused to be carried away at every gust of wind, but tried, first, to foresee its final destination.

Well, years passed. Our teachings were spreading slowly, all too slowly for our satisfaction. We had several publications expounding our viewpoint

and our opinions about current events, but they were not gaining popularity. It hurt us to see the fine efforts of such people as Emma Bernstein and Alex Green, two gifted revolutionists, going to fruitless waste.

Then came the turning point in our Movement. Since 1907, after we changed our policies to adopt ourselves to the peculiar American prejudices, we have grown far beyond our wildest dreams.

This is, briefly, what we did: knowing the unalterable prejudice against Jews and realizing that this small obstacle was hindering the progress of our vast social program, we prevailed upon Emma to change her name slightly, from Bernstein to Burr. The initials thus remained the same while the illustrious name connected with our really Revolutionary days would arouse interest in this new Revolutionist. We also induced Alex to add an "e" to his last name, and when we saw that Greene was another Revolutionary name the coincidence seemed propitious in our eyes.

Then we examined our program very critically. First we put to the test our concept of a society without government. We analyzed it carefully and saw that such a society was possible, but that the people were not ready for it yet. They were not even ready to listen to such an idea, let alone carry it out. So we decided that, if we were sincerely concerned about the good of the people, we must relegate such idealism to the background, and advocate some practical reform that would be beneficial immediately. WE advocated, therefore, the limitation of government instead of its abolition. However, Emma Burr and Alex Greene opposed this so strenuously that we inserted a cautious phrase about our ultimate goal being the abolition of all government. Of course we realize now that such an ideal is still far away.

We then proceeded to examine our economic policies. Our original concept of the trade union, for instance, was that it should serve as the instrument of Revolution. But such a concept is actually of no practical value, if you try to carry it out in real life. What real gains does it offer the worker—now? today? So we modified our objectives somewhat. We dropped out such phrases as "class war," "revolutionary unit," "unit of production after the Social Revolution," "General Strike," and substituted "collective bargaining," "improvement of conditions," and "higher wages and less hours." You see, the original phrases only succeeded in frightening people and stiffening the opposition and sentiment against us, whereas our new objectives attracted the workers and roused the sympathy of those neutrals who had previously ignored us.

Having so revised our policies, we came before the people once more. But we found we were still being received coldly on all sides.

An eminent sociologist, who was interested in our Movement, made a remark to the effect that a people's prejudices are as dear to them as their institutions such as government or our capitalistic society. We, being not so dumb, if I may say so, saw that we were still antagonizing the people by several of our proposed changes.

For instance, we were teaching race equality in the South where they dislike the Negro so much. In prim, puritan New England we were fighting the Church and preaching free-marriage relations; we advocated such freedom of



action and thought that they probably thought we were either insane or dangerous radicals. Likewise we were telling the farmers in the West the same thing as the proletariat in the large cities of the East, namely, that we advocated the abolition of private ownership of the means of production.

Such absurdities made us laugh once we were aware of them. In the convention of 1909, following our ideal of critical examination of each of our points, we came to the conclusion that the situation in America was such as to warrant different programs in the various sections of the country. Thus, down South we were to omit all reference to the race question, and, since the race question did not affect either the North or the West we decided to leave it out of our program entirely. The same was true of religion: the subject was a touchy one in the North and the South, while, out West, the people were, for the most part, very sensible about the subject. Our ideas about government were also radically changed: since the Capitalists were using the government to oppress us we must gain control of the government in order to fight them. Our trade unions were being handicapped in their struggles because of the intervention of the government on the side of the bosses, and by the use of the injunction.

So, in 1909, we came to the momentous decision that, if we were to bring about any permanent reforms for the benefit of the people, we must enter politics. Again Emma Burr and Alex Greene objected so vigorously that we were forced to make it perfectly clear that our entrance into politics was only temporary until the workers had won their rights.

Since then, of course, our fortunes and misfortunes are fairly well known. In 1910 we won ten seats in the House of Representatives, which corresponds, as you know, to your Commons. We continued to grow until 1916 when we had 53 members in the House, and 2 U. S. Senators. Then came that terrible catastrophe from which we have not yet recovered. When the U. S. entered the War, our Movement was torn by internal conflict—some were opposed to our entry into the War, others wanted to support our country through her hour of peril and crisis. We finally decided to do nothing decisive, though we did cooperate with the government later when we were called upon to do our duty. But now, for the first time, Emma Burr and Alex Greene broke away from the Movement. They violently opposed the war, holding protest meetings everywhere and even inciting a few riots. The result was that they were arrested and put in jail where they languished until the end of the war so that they were no longer able to carry on the good work of the Movement.

When the war ended, the trade unions found themselves very powerful. We were in the midst of prosperity, and the workers were much better off than ever before. We, of course, attributed all this to our watchfulness and resource, and, consequently expected to be victorious in the coming elections. You can imagine how crestfallen we were when we failed to win a single seat! The bottom had fallen out of our Movement.

We studied the platform of the victorious Republicans to see why they were preferred. Item by item we studied their platform but it seemed so many empty phrases compared to our concrete platform. We offered a concrete plan (it was

modified to lessen the opposition of the employing class and gain the sympathy of the neutrals). We demanded a federal system of employment exchanges, we were in favor of limiting child labor in the South, and we wanted to abolish the injunction that was so harmful to our labor struggles. Finally, where the Republicans favored a high tariff we favored a low one which would lower prices and favor the worker. Why, then, had the workers turned from us to the less favorable Republican platform? Because they had a foreign policy. The answer is simple, yet we could not find it for a long time. WE could not see what difference it made to the ordinary worker what the foreign policy was, or how it affected his life. But apparently we were not taking into consideration such a thing as national pride.

So we saw that if we were not to fall into oblivion, we must modify our ideals, a little, once more: we must become one hundred per cent Americans—there was no other way out. Our own nation would now have to come before all other nations, our workers before all other workers.

In 1926 we opened our campaign with this addition to our platform: we favored recognition of Russia because it would help business, and we favored America's entry into the League of Nations. Emma Burr and Alex Greene, who had been released a few years before, were elected to the House along with 150 more members of the Movement.

In 1930 we thought it would be a fit climax to all our efforts, as well as a fit recognition of our growth and influence in America, if we would be able to elect Emma Burr as President of the United States. But there were two obstacles in our way: the Constitution expressly forbids a foreigner to become President, and a woman had never been President before. However, we were not stopped for long.

About this time the European nations began repudiating their war debts to America. Instantly we decided to make use of this in Emma Burr's favor. We played up her firm resistance against our entry into the War and said she did it because she knew, better than all the Americans, that Europeans were not faithful, were treacherous, and breakers of contracts. We demanded full payments of our debts and were so firm in our stand that even the Republicans were surprised. They instantly offered to help us. You see, they were so interested because they represent the bankers and industrialists whose money was being threatened. Personally, I see no harm in a little class cooperation once in while, do you?

It was decided that, in order to rouse the nation to the proper pitch, a popular leader would have to be created to espouse the cause. Who could be better than Emma Burr who had suffered imprisonment for her country, who must now be rewarded by a penitent people?

A powerful blast of agitation gripped the nation. It was shown that a foreigner was even more suited for the presidency of this country than a native American because he was more acquainted with foreign diplomacy.

Well, the rest of the story is too familiar for detail. In less than two years the proper amendment was passed, and a few months ago Emma Burr was elected President, with the help of the Republican Party.



She now faces the unique position of heading a government in which her party has only a minority. However she still possesses her God-given gift of rare courage, and like a true diplomat, has already fixed up a working agreement with the Republican majority. She will leave the tariff as it is; the child labor question is also to be avoided because of the unsettled condition of the South; a federal unemployment insurance act may be considered a few years from now but it would be too much of a drain on the treasury in these days of depression and widespread unemployment; the federal system of employment exchanges may be considered this very year. In return the Republicans have already promised their support for her re-election.

In conclusion, I should like to state in a concise form exactly what the Anarchist Movement has accomplished in America. First and foremost, let me point out that the word "Anarchist" is no longer feared and abused as it once was. Secondly, we have succeeded in breaking one of the most strongly entrenched prejudices in the U. S. by having a foreigner elected President, a woman, and a Jewish woman at that, although, of course, that is not widely known. Finally, I want to assure all sympathizers with the Labor Movement that all the reforms we have ever advocated are, now that we are in power, just around the corner.

ABE

## Revolutionary Spain

FOR MANY CENTURIES this country has suffered at the hands of monarchy. The people of Spain have "progressed" historically along the course of poverty, misery, and religious subjugation.

Most of the country was (and still is) largely agricultural, and until recently the industrial revolution has made no inroads. The population of 22 million contains only 7 million who can read and write well and 5 million semi-literate. The catholic church owns more than one-third of the land. Another great portion is owned by a few great land owners. Most of the peasants must therefore subsist on unbelievably small plots of ground, while 4 million peasants own no land at all. These, as well as other conditions made many Spaniards susceptible to the revolutionary ideas of Bakounin, Proudhon, Kropotkin, and others. The anarchistic influences and reaction against the oppression of church and state aided the establishing among the more revolutionary elements, a strong tradition of liberty, local autonomy, direct action and the federalist principles (as the anarchists understand it). These traditions have their concrete expression mainly in the form of labor organizations. The C.N.T. (Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo) is a federation of syndicates whose membership is about 1 million. The adherents of this revolutionary organization (which consists of agricultural and industrial workers) are largely anarchists or anarcho-syndicalists. It is interesting to note that there are hardly any salaried officers in the C.T.N. And the Iberian Anarchist Federation (F.A.I.), which contains more than 400 groups, and has a greater influence than any other revolutionary organization in Spain, has *no salaried officials*. The conservative U.G.T. (Union General del Trabajo) is rapidly falling; and the communists number about 18,000 throughout the land.

The C.N.T. has had difficult struggles during its existence, a great deal of which was underground. It has shown itself to be in harmony with the revolutionary trend of the Spanish workers. Such tendencies began to crystallize when the monarchy was overthrown in the spring of 1931. Comrade L. Raymond, writing from Spain, illustrates their spirit. He says, "In a village of about 100 people, Montefurado, the preacher was forcibly sent away in a cattle train. This took place in many other towns throughout the country. In Barcelona the model prison was burned by the revolutionists. It has remained without doors for nearly a year; *and the revolutionary workers will build no more jails, no less jail doors.*"

Alphonso is gone. But in his place is the "Republican-Socialists" dictatorship. Comrade Raymond describes it as follows: "During this dictatorial reign of terror, deportation en masse from many towns took place throughout the country. As usual the anarchists and syndicalists paid the price for their activities; the socialists were not even molested. They did not protest—they are in power today and act more brutally than the monarchists—."

With their distrust of politicians and a widespread aversion to parliamentary methods, workers and peasants, rallying around the slogan "Land and Liberty",



are doing revolutionary work ranging from well organized general strikes to spontaneous revolts of illiterate peasants. This has resulted in a systematic campaign of defamation, lying, censorship of news from Spain, etc. A Parisian anarchist-communist weekly "Le Libertaire", discusses some of the reports about the C.N.T. published in the bourgeois journals of France. One of the latter, "L'Oeuvre", states (May 22, 1932) that the Minister of the Interior had *discovered* a whole series of plots in the C.N.T. which were to culminate on the 29th. Le Libertaire points out that these plots were the preparations for protest meetings against deportations, which the newspapers of the C.N.T. had previously announced. "L'Oeuvre" further states that 1500 bombs were discovered in Andalusia by the police. Lack of space prevents me from quoting in full the answers which Le Libertaire gives to this and to many other mis-statements. However, I shall quote from an article in the June 17, 1932 issue of Le Libertaire which states in part: "The number of bombs found by the police is multiplied by the 'Ministre de l'Interieur.' The newspapers speak of 1500 explosives. In reality the police found only 100. And furthermore the discovery was not due to their skill but was made by chance. As for other bombs, they were discovered in the same places where the authorities had put them in advance."

The government presses this question as a decisive argument against the working class by Andalusia. However, it deceives itself, for that will not gain them the least sympathy. On the contrary, such news arouses in peasants of other localities the desire to possess for themselves also a small provision of the means of attack and defense. Everybody affirms, and you may well believe it, that even the most insignificant villages have their little stock of bombs for which the guardians of the republican order have been searching in vain for three months. "The peasants of this region," says the special messenger of LaTierra, "are ready for anything. The prospect of a hundred, or two deaths, or of three thousand prisoners cannot stop them. They understand the importance of this hour and they go forth, to the *social revolution*, even if they must bathe this earth with their own blood."

"In fact the peasants feel that the day is fast approaching when they will have to take the land and that they will not be able to do it with speeches or with sticks. They believe that two kinds of violence will face one another: that of the government, to maintain all its privileges, and that of the working class, to effect the disappearance of these privileges. Under such conditions what is so astonishing in the fact that the peasants consider bombs indispensable for themselves?

"The police were able to discover one of these 'machines' due to the following fortuitous circumstances: a bomb exploded in the hands of Udefonso Jiminez, a worker of Montellano. Having been seriously wounded, he was brought to the hospital and there, writhing, in excruciating pain, he demanded treatment, something to calm him. But the officers in the presence of the doctor insulted him, and threatened to refuse him treatment, if he did not tell all that he knew. And then, Jiminez, overcome with anguish, made some remarks which were the basis of this 'formidable' police discovery."

Concerning the repeated lies about the recent strike of El Ferrol, Galicia, Le

Libertaire says: "The general strike—which is twelve days old at the time these lines are being written has furnished the *Agencies* a new occasion for proving that their work is infamous, and for rendering (by the use of spurious information, all of which is lent to the *Ministre l'Interieure*) a great service to the '*Republic—of Workers*'. And besides falsifying the true aspects of the conflict, they have copiously befouled the strikers."

"The origin of the strike is as follows. A rumor having spread, to the effect that the 'Constructora Naval,' which employs most of the workers of Ferrol, was going to discharge a large number of its personnel, a strong agitation began to manifest itself. On the day of discharging, the workers immediately began to strike. The elements of the U.G.T. (who were in a great majority a few months ago, but who are now in a microscopic minority) followed the C.N.T. in protesting with the latter against the actions of a government in which three of the directors of a reformist organization played a large part."

"Largo Caballero, a socialist deputy, declared that it was because of the coercion and threats of the C.N.T. that the U.G.T. participated in the strike. But the adherents of the latter organization have contradicted him in stating that they followed the C.N.T. spontaneously and that they were threatened by no one whatsoever."

"The government has put everything into play in order to strangle this movement and to break the unity of the workers. They trouble themselves in vain."

"The newspapers said that all business had ceased as a measure of precaution. This is false. Business closed down, astonishing as it may seem, because of sympathy and solidarity with the strikers. In order to show their solidarity, workers not employed at the Constructora Naval, left their places. And also, to show their solidarity, the small peasant proprietors refused to bring each morning, as they used to, their agricultural products to Ferrol."

"Soldiers cannot make bread, nor milk, nor can they furnish light. The means of communication are paralyzed. The situation in the city is serious from all points of view."

"All the attempts to break the strike have faded away pitifully. The last attempt was by the government which sent an emissary, the socialist deputy Lorenzo, to ask the members of the U.G.T. to go back to work. They refused."

"El Ferrol is today an immense barrack. And its prison is filled with workers."

"The Regional Confederation of Galicia is ready to declare a general strike in order to manifest its solidarity with their comrades of El Ferrol, at any moment when the latter deem it necessary."

At the present time it is estimated that there are about 100 local strikes going on throughout Spain. Mansions are being burnt, and the rich reactionaries, and yellow socialists are being boycotted in every possible way. There is a cry among the peasants to take the land (in some parts, we are told, it has been done) and it is only a matter of a few weeks before the social revolution will come into full swing."

Comrades, we salute your good work and pledge our militant support. We, in America, shall do everything possible to win sympathy and popularity to our movement in Spain. We hail the Spanish Social Revolution and its coming victory.

S. M.

Further developments will be printed in the next issue of this Journal.